Ranking Tool Summary

for FY2014 - NE Forestry Initative (Released 12/13/2013)

Description:

Statewide ranking tool to address forestry resource concerns in Nebraska. The Nebraska Forestry Initiative ranking tool is based on the ranking developed for the former Nebraska Foresty Special Initiative. This Statewide ranking tool is designed to address the specific needs and opportunities of Forestland resources in Nebraska. Nebraskas forests, i.e. natural woodlands and conservation tree/shrub plantings , provide multiple conservation benefits including watershed protection, wildlife habitat, energy conservation, wood products, crop & livestock protection, carbon sequestration, recreational opportunities, etc. This ranking tool is designed to address the specific needs for planting and/or managing these forest resources of Nebraska. Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380) and Windbreak Renovation (650) are the primary practices to address these resource concerns, Other applicable practices: Prescribed Burning (338), Fence (382), Riparian Forest Buffers (391), Tree/Shrub Establishment (612), Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (490), Restoration or Management of Rare or Declining Habitats (643), Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645), Tree/Shrub Pruning (660), Forest Stand Improvement (666). Special emphasis is placed on practices to improve existing woodlands. A maximum of 2 resource concerns can be identified for each practice selected.

Land Uses:

Associated Agriculture Land, Crop, Farmstead, Forest, Pasture, Range

Efficiency Score:

Scoring Multiplier: 1.000

Optional Notes:

National Priorities:

Scoring Multiplier: 1.000 Questions:

Number	Question	Points
1	a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is "Yes", do not answer any other national level questions. If answer is "No", proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	250
2	a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to animal feeding operations, or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15
2	b. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a designated "impaired water body" (TMDL, 303d, etc.)?	15
2	c. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a "non-impaired water body"?	5
3	a. Decrease aquifer overdraft?	15
3	b. Conserve water from irrigation system improvements and saved water will be available for other beneficial uses?	10
3	c. Conserve water in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	5
4	a. Meet on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15
4	b. Reduce on-farm generated green house gases such as CO2 (Carbon Dioxide), CH4 (Methane), and N2O (Nitrous Oxide)?	15
4	c. Increase on-farm carbon sequestration?	5
5	a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")?	15
5	b. Improve soil tilth, organic matter, structure, health, etc.?	5
6	a. Benefit on-farm habitat associated with threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern as identified in a State wildlife plan?	15
6	b. Help retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?	10
7	a. Help manage or control noxious or invasive plant species on non-cropland?	10
7	b. Increase, or improve habitat to benefit pollinator or other targeted wildlife species?	10
7	c. Properly dispose of livestock carcasses?	5
7	d. Are identified in an Integrated Pest Management plan?	10
7	e. Are identified in a Nutrient Management plan?	10
7	f. Apply principles of adaptive nutrient management?	5
8	a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?	15
8	b. Increase on-farm energy efficiency with practices and improvements identified in an approved energy audit equivalent to criteria required in Ag EMP?	10

8	c. Assist in implementing energy conservation measures that also reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants?	10
9	a. Implementation of all conservation practices scheduled in the contract on the CPA-1155 within three years of date of obligation?	10
9	b. Improvement of existing conservation practices or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is accepted?	5
9	c. Implementation of practice(s) which will complete an existing conservation system or suite of practices?	5
	Total Points	500

State Issues:

Scoring Multiplier: 1.130 Questions:

Sub- heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
	1	Will the treatment(s) you intend to implement using EQIP result in the ecological improvement of existing forestland for soil conservation? (666, 643, 472, 612, 338)	39
	2	Will the treatment(s) you intend to implement using EQIP result in the ecological improvement of existing forestland for water quality? (666,643, 472)	28
	3	Will the treatment(s) you intend to implement using EQIP result in the ecological improvement of existing forestland for wildlife habitat? (666, 643, 472, 338)	28
	4	Will the treatment(s) you intend to implement using EQIP result in the improvement or restoration of a declining forest community? (666, 643, 472, 338)	36
	5	Will the treatment(s) you intend to implement using EQIP result in the improved health and vigor of existing windbreaks/shelterbelts? (650, 472)	43
	6	Will the conservation tree/shrub planting(s) you intend to implement using EQIP result in improved air quality? (380,612, 472)	19
	7	Will the forestry treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in improved energy conservation? (380,472)	27
	8	Will the treatment(s) you intend to implement using EQIP result in the protection, restoration, development, or enhancement of habitat for "at risk" or "threatened or endangered" aquatic or wildlife species? (643)	23
	9	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the ecological improvement to native woodlands that will include at least two of the following management techniques: 1) prescribed burning; 2) selective thinning for forest stand improvement; 3) inter-planting of desired native species to improve diversity; 4) development of micro-habitat components such as snags, brush	48

	piles, and forest openings?	
10	Will the conservation tree/shrub planting(s) you intend to implement using EQIP result in improved protection of soil from erosion? (380, 612, 472)	27
11	Will the conservation tree/shrub planting(s) you intend to implement using EQIP result in improved livestock protection? (380, 472)	31
12	Will the treatment(s) you intend to implement using EQIP be included in a Forest Stewardship Plan approved by the Nebraska Forest Service?	51
	Maximum Points: Total Points	400

Local Issues:

Scoring Multiplier: 0.800 Questions:

Sub- heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
	1	Does the applicant who is applying for EQIP qualify for Limited Resource status?	33
		Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP be applied on recently expired CRP, maintaining the CRP cover for the purpose of wildlife habitat, grazing or haying?	80
		If the applicant who is applying for EQIP is also a previous/present contract holder or has been associated with a contract, has the applicant ever had a contract out of compliance or modified to reschedule a practice without a defendable meritorious reason? Meritorious reason examples include personal hardship, adverse weather conditions, etc.	-25
		Is the treatment(s) implemented in this EQIP project being utilized for demonstration purposes to local groups (schools, 4-H clubs, landowner tours, extensions specialists)?	43
		Are other conservation partners assisting with the EQIP project to implement objectives of Nebraska's Forestry Special Initiative by providing financial assistance?	46
		Would the applicant who is applying for EQIP be receiving their first contract if successfully approved? (applicant has never been associated with another EQIP contract or entity that had one).	53
	7	Is the treatment you intend to implement identified in an current farm plan?	20
		Maximum Points: Total Points	250